

Remarks

Claims 1-15 were previously canceled. Claims 16-35 are pending and stand rejected. New claims 27-35 have been added by the present amendment. Thus claims 16-35 remain pending for prosecution.

The Examiner rejected claims 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Ringdahl et al. As amended, these claims each call for a first linkage for cooperating with the lifting mechanism to move the platform from the transfer level position to the vertically-stowed position and a second linkage that is directly connected to the first linkage for moving the plate between the raised barrier position and the lowered bridging position. Ringdahl et al. neither discloses nor suggests the claimed linkage. The Ringdahl et al. cam finger 120, follower arm 124 and cable mechanism 130 that are used to move plate 16 are not directly connected to the linkage that moves the platform 8 from the transfer level position to the vertically-stowed position. In Ringdahl et al., a linkage system comprising link arms 100A and 100B and slide shoe 102 moves platform 8 from the transfer level position to the vertically-stowed position and is separate from and not directly connected to the plate-moving linkage system (i.e. cam finger 120, arm 124 and cable 130). Thus, applicants respectfully submit that amended claims 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 26 are patentable over Ringdahl et al. New claims 27-30 depend from claim 16 and are allowable for the same reasons claim 16 is allowable, among other things.

As to new claim 31, this claim is identical to claim 18 as previously presented, but written in independent form. Thus, because the Examiner did not reject claim 18 over the cited prior art, applicants submit that new claims 31 and 32-35 (which depend therefrom) are allowable over the prior art.

Claim 19 has been amended to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112 and a terminal disclaimer is submitted herewith to meet the non-statutory double patenting rejection.

Accordingly, applicants respectfully request entry of this amendment and allowance of all pending claims 16-35.

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Respectfully submitted,



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